

## 269,744 Jordanians return from Kuwait\*

AMMAN (R) — More than a quarter of a million Jordanians have fled to Jordan from Kuwait since the start of the Gulf crisis, a senior official said Saturday. He said 269,744 arrived between Iraq's invasion on Aug. 2 and July 25, putting a huge strain on Jordan's already limited resources and stagnating economy. "For the country this is a catastrophe of the highest level but you cannot stop citizens from returning," the official, who declined to be named, told Reuters. "We still expect thousands of others to come from Kuwait after they collect their money and settle their affairs, because life there has become impossible for them." The Palestinian minister in Kuwait says the Palestinian community has shrunk to 90,000 from 350,000 before the invasion. Many if not most are Jordanian passport-holders. Kuwait has terminated the contracts of tens of thousands of Palestinian civil servants. Officials often refer to the recent flood as the "third wave of immigration" to Jordan following mass arrivals after the Arab-Israeli wars of 1948 and 1967.

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## Cabinet reforms economic council

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet decided Saturday to reform the Economic Consultancy Council. The council provides consultancy and advice in economic, financial and monetary domains and presents proposals and recommendations needed to activate the economic and social growth processes. According to the decision, the council will be chaired by the prime minister and will comprise as members the ministers of finance, planning, trade, industry and supply, the Central Bank of Jordan, governor, the president of the Amman Chamber of Industry, the president of the chambers of commerce, president of the Contractors Association, president of the Farmers Association, Khalid Shoman, Jawad Hadid, Ismail Abdul Rahman, Khalil Abu Khourna and Fahed Al Faneck. The Cabinet also approved the political parties law and will refer it to the National Security Council.

# Jordan Times

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## UNHCR 'appalled' by Ethiopian camps

ADDIS ABABA (AP) — The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) says she is "saddened and appalled" by conditions in Ethiopian refugee camps. After visiting four camps in western and eastern Ethiopia, Sadako Ogata told reporters Saturday she had seen "shocking signs of malnutrition" and "extremely high rates of tuberculosis, pneumonia and mortality among children." The commissioner said very little food except wheat was reaching most of the isolated camps and there was an urgent need for supplementary food.

## U.N. official holds talks in Greece

ATHENS (R) — A senior U.N. official in Greece to seek progress on the Cyprus problem, said Saturday that a quick solution could only be reached if the parties wanted it. "I believe it will be good to have a solution before the end of the year, but of course it depends on the political will of the parties," Oscar Camilión, special representative of U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar, told reporters. "The Cyprus issue is very difficult. We must at least convince the parties to negotiate," he said after a meeting with Greek Foreign Minister Antonis Samaras. Mr. Camilión and his aide, Gustave Feissel, held talks in Turkey Friday. They will also visit Cyprus.

## Kabul seeks Islamic bona fide

ISLAMABAD (R) — The Soviet-backed Afghan government is seeking Syrian help to regain its place in the 45-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), the Bakhtar news agency reported Saturday. Prime Minister Fazal Haq Khalqyar made the request for help to Syrian Vice-President Zuhier Masharqa when they met in Kabul Friday, it said. The Jeddah-based OIC suspended Afghanistan after the December 1989 Soviet-military intervention that put a new pro-Moscow government in power in Kabul. Bakhtar said Mr. Masharqa assured Mr. Khalqyar that Syria would "try its utmost" to achieve expansion of Afghanistan's relations with other Islamic countries and restoration of its OIC membership.

## Tunisian league assails press freedom curbs

TUNIS (R) — The Tunisian Human Rights League Saturday accused the government of violating press freedom. A league statement expressed "very keen displeasure" with the "serious deterioration of freedoms of the press and of opinion such as never seen before" in Tunisia. It said numerous organs of opinion and opposition had disappeared, radio and television were not independent and there was widespread censorship. The league denounced what it called a ban on publication of its own statements. Opposition papers which appeared in the early 1980s, and since President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali seized power in November 1987, ceased publication last year. Censorship was imposed on the written press at the beginning of the Gulf crisis last August. Last month the government declared La Presse said the measure would be relaxed.

## Iraqi Communists urge U.N. to lift exports ban

DAMASCUS (R) — The exiled Iraqi Communist Party appealed to the U.N. Security Council Saturday to allow Iraq to sell oil to pay for food and medicine. "Isolating or besieging a dictatorship should not be done by starving and subjugating our people," the Syrian-based party said in a statement marking the first anniversary of Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. The U.N. has lifted its Gulf war embargo on the sale of food and medicine to Iraq but Baghdad says it needs oil revenue to pay for them.

## Masri: Jordan has guarantee Israel will return territory

Premier reaffirms Kingdom has not and will not deviate from its principled stand

### Combined Agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordan has received guarantees that Israel will return occupied Arab territories as part of any Middle East peace settlement. Prime Minister Taher Masri said Saturday.

"Jordan has received guarantees that Resolution 242 meant Israel's withdrawal from Arab territories, that the annexation of Jerusalem is illegal although there is a problem over the participation of the sons of Jerusalem in a Palestinian delegation, and that they had the right to vote on their future like those from the West Bank and Gaza Strip," Mr. Masri told the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Mr. Masri did not say who gave the guarantees. Officials said they had asked the United States to state in writing the meaning of Resolution 242 and 338 and to pledge they would be the basis of any settlement.

Syria, the first Arab country to accept U.S. proposals for a peace conference, said Thursday President George Bush had given assurances that Israel would have to withdraw "on all fronts" in return for peace with the Arabs.

The United States has said Resolutions 242 and 338, which call on Israel to withdraw from occupied territories, in exchange for peace, will be the basis for any settlement. Israel refuses to give up the occupied territories.

Arab East Jerusalem is at present the main obstacle to convening a conference. Israel, which claims "sovereignty" over the whole of the occupied Holy City, insists Arab Jerusalem Palestinians be excluded from a Palestinian delegation while Palestinians demand their inclusion.

The prime minister pointed out to the suffering of the Palestinian people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and said the repressive measures under which they live threaten their existence, land and identity.

Mr. Masri said despite the fact that the U.S.-proposed peace conference is not called an international peace conference, it is still not a regional conference as is.

"It is a peace conference in which the 12-member European Community, a representative of the U.N. secretary general, the two super-powers and all the parties to the Middle East conflict will be taking part and the basis for holding the conference will be Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 in order to reach a comprehensive and lasting solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict," he said.

He added that the final formula for holding the conference was not decided yet and the issue of the Palestinian representation at the conference was also not settled.

In related developments:

Egypt said Saturday the future of Arab Jerusalem should not be excluded from proposed peace talks.

"East Jerusalem is part of the occupied Arab territories. What applies for occupied lands in West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights applies to it," Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters.

President Hosni Mubarak's chief political adviser, Osama Al Baz, has echoed Palestinian suggestions that Jerusalem could be jointly run by Israelis and Palestinians.

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## New IAEA mission arrives in Iraq amid fresh allegations

ing at the Tarmiya site.

The report identifies Tarmiya, just north of Baghdad, as the main production site for the enrichment of uranium by centrifuge. It said the investigators could confirm as much when a concrete layer that had been poured over a key component in order to conceal it was removed.

While the report said Iraq confirmed the investigators' suspicions that Tarmiya was a major uranium enrichment centre, "it seems likely that the full extent of the centrifuge work has not been disclosed."

Thursday was the deadline set by the U.N. Security Council for the Iraqi government to disclose all details of its nuclear programme, under terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

The United States and its Gulf war allies had indicated they were prepared for a military strike if the deadline was not met, but American officials have said an attack any such facilities.

David Kay, the chief inspector, said Saturday his team, attached to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, would visit numerous sites, but would not disclose the locations.

"The whole idea is that they should be surprised inspections," he said.

The group was expected to meet with Iraqi officials later Saturday and begin its inspection visits Sunday.

Maurizio Zifferero, the inspection team coordinator, said earlier the team's mission was to "try to clarify the extent of the centrifuge programme" in which Iraq making weapons-grade uranium.

The previous inspection team issued a report Friday saying investigators on a July 7-18 mission discovered a plant at Tarmiya, Iraq, that could have produced up to 15 kilograms a year of enriched uranium, which is used to make nuclear weapons.

Mr. Kay said Saturday that was possible — if all the equipment had been installed and function-

plant at Al Sharqat, about 320 kilometres from Baghdad, "was not, as alleged during the inspection, a factory for the plastic coating of equipment," the investigators wrote.

Most of the plant, which Iraq said was used to coat pipes and containers with protective coating and production of machine tools, was destroyed in allied bombing during the Gulf war.

The centrifuge process separates isotopes by subjecting processed natural uranium in a gas form to high rotation in steel cylinders.

Sources close to the third inspection team said one lead still to be followed up could be test sites for conventional explosives, which can be used to detonate nuclear weapons.

Iraq insists that its nuclear programmes were only for peaceful, scientific research.

It says it only succeeded in slightly enriching half a kilogramme of uranium, far too little to make a nuclear bomb.

The third inspection team said 85 per cent of the equipment it inspected was destroyed in Gulf war bombing raids.

The IAEA's Blix said Friday that Iraq's nuclear programme relied mainly on a technique that "costs much more electricity than it would ever give from enriched uranium in nuclear power reactors."

"It's a very expensive method," he said. "There is no plausible peaceful explanation of what they have been doing."

"If a country has mastered the technique of enriching uranium, it's only a matter of time before they can make a bomb — and Iraq had mastered that technique."

Britain says its nuclear exports were not for military use, page 2

## Israel says U.S. denying having given any assurance to Syria over Golan

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's foreign ministry said Saturday that U.S. Ambassador to Israel William Brown denied there was an American assurance to Syria that Israel would have to withdraw from the occupied Golan Heights.

Israel in response has said that all parties are entitled to their own interpretation of the resolutions.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir this week repeated that he did not believe in the land-for-peace formula — on any front.

Opposition Labour leader Shimon Peres voiced concern that Mr. Shamir would not achieve Arab-Israeli peace.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharara said Thursday that Mr. Bush had given Damascus assurances that Israel would have to withdraw on all fronts in return for peace with Arabs.

On Friday Mr. Shamir said U.S. commitment to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East had persuaded Syria to agree to talks with Israel on the basis of land for peace.

Israel has said it will only respond to U.S. proposals for the talks — already accepted by Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states — after the makeup of the Palestinian delegation is clear.

Syria's agreement to attend the talks has been seen as a breakthrough putting the burden of continuing the peace process on Israel.

"In my opinion, if you invite Mr. Assad and tell him we will not get anything there is no logic in the invitation," Mr. Peres said. "But with this, I wouldn't say beforehand that I am ready to concede this or that."

Mr. Peres also hinted that Mr. Shamir was influenced by his right-wing coalition partners.

"We know the opinions of Raviv Zeevi, Geula Cohen, Yuval and Ravid," Mr. Peres said, referring to the three parties that threatened to bolt the coalition if "concessions" were made.

"He (Mr. Shamir) invited them one by one and they all left satisfied. What do you want, that this will make me greatly optimistic?" Mr. Peres asked.

No U.S. embassy officials were immediately available for comment.

A U.S. official said Thursday Washington believed U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 applied to "all the fronts" and therefore it did not recognise Israel's "annexation" of the Golan Heights.

The opening meeting would break

up into four work groups: Israel-Syria, Israel-Jordan-Palestinians, Israel-Saudi Arabia-Kuwait, and a committee that could handle water and ecological issues. Lebanon's interests presumably would be represented by Syria, according to the National Security Council.

likely one.

"There are down sides to issuing what you might call 'challenge invitations,'" he said.

"When you bring people to a conference sort of against their will, they don't come with the psychological attitude to make the conference a success. They come already feeling they've made a concession to get there and that's not the best attitude for success," he said.

Israel reportedly insists on seeing the invitations to a conference before they are sent. If Mr. Bush and Mr. Gorbachev issue the invitations at their Moscow summit next week, it would put Israel on the spot.

Israel Radio reported Friday that Israel now insists that negotiating goals be set out beforehand and demanded to see the peace conference's opening session.

Israel also demands that Jordan's foreign minister — and not a Palestinian — speak for the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation at the conference's opening session, the radio said.

Yossi Ahimeir, a top aide to Mr. Shamir, refused to comment on the report.

The Israeli cabinet is to meet Sunday.

Among the sticking points for a conference is a dispute over representation for the Palestinians.

Foreign Minister David Levy suggested in an interview published Friday that Israel would make procedural concessions to launch peace talks, but insisted it would not budge on its refusal to allow Palestinian negotiations from Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Levy told the daily Jerusalem Post: "This is the main problem. The rest of the things we'll overcome together."

Mr. Shamir said Friday that Israel must start negotiations with the Arab

(Continued on page 2)

## Madagascar opposition defiant

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Lebanese President Elias Hrawi began talks in Damascus Saturday with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Political sources told Israel Radio Saturday that Israel had informed the United States it would not discuss issues concerning Lebanon with Syria as that would recognise Syria's right to do as it pleased in Lebanon.

Avi Pazner, a top aide to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, denied any such message was sent to the United States, but insisted it would not budge on its refusal to allow Palestinian negotiations from Arab East Jerusalem.

Lebanon's most influential Shiite Muslim cleric has rejected the U.S.-initiated Middle East peace plan, saying it would strip the Arabs of their rights and accomplish Israel's strategic interests.

"America wants Israel to be the superpower in the region at the expense of Arab and Islamic rights," Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah said in his Friday sermon at the Imam Reza Mosque in south Beirut.

Lengthy excerpts of the sermon were published by Beirut newspapers Saturday.

Sheikh Fadlallah is the spiritual

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## Israel says it will not discuss Lebanon with Syria as Assad, Hrawi begin talks

pressure to bear on Israel to withdraw from a buffer zone it holds in South Lebanon.

Political sources told Israel Radio Saturday that Israel had informed the United States it would not discuss issues concerning Lebanon with Syria as that would recognise Syria's right to do as it pleased in Lebanon.

Avi Pazner, a top aide to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, denied any such message was sent to the United States, but insisted that the report did not contradict the government position.

"It is logical that we would discuss with Syria issues between us and them, and with Lebanon issues concerning us and them, but we didn't issue any such statement," Mr. Pazner said.

Lebanon is expected to demand Israel withdraw from a 1,100-square-kilometre "security zone" it carved out as a buffer against cross-border guerrilla

(Continued on page 2)

## Two Palestinians killed in occupied West Bank and Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians said Saturday that Israeli undercover troops shot dead a Palestinian youth in the occupied West Bank late Friday night.

They said Iyad Nimer Isa Sabah, 22, was killed while a 15-year-old youth was wounded in the same ambush.

A military official said shots were fired at an army patrol from a speeding suburb near Tulkarm on Friday night. Troops returned fire but the attackers escaped.

In a separate report the official said Sabah, whose age he gave as 18, was brought to hospital in Tulkarm with another injured youth. He said Sabah, who was wanted by the occupation authorities, later died of his wounds.

Spokesmen for the coalition said they expected more leaders to be arrested soon but said the protests would not stop as the movement was strong enough to replace them.

"We're continuing despite the latest arrest. If they take us all, there are always people to replace us," Frederic Anona, "higher education minister" in the shadow government, told Reuters.

# Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, JULY 26, 1992

## Iraq says oil-sale controls will violate its sovereignty

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraq has complained to the Security Council president that controls envisaged for monitoring the sale of Iraqi oil to buy food and other necessities would infringe on its sovereignty.

After a meeting with Iraqi U.N. Representative Abdul Amr Al Anbari, the council president, Ricardo Alarcon of Cuba, said: "He perceives this as a very serious threat to Iraqi sovereignty."

A number of council members have stressed the need for close U.N. supervision of any Iraqi oil sales, as well as of the purchase and distribution of humanitarian supplies, to ensure there is no diversion by the Baghdad government.

Mr. Alarcon said he expected Mr. Anbari would raise his objections with other council members.

They have only just begun to consider privately whether to allow Iraq to sell some of its U.N.-embargoed oil, not only to buy badly needed civilian supplies but also to pay for the U.N.-supervised elimination of Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction, to meet half the costs of a U.N. commission demarcating the Kuwait-Iraq border, and to feed a U.N. war reparations fund.

No resolution has yet been drafted and there is no indication yet how much oil Iraq might eventually be allowed to sell.

Turkey may play a crucial role in the monitoring of any Iraqi oil exports by allowing the use of two oil pipelines closed down last year, a government official said in Ankara.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the twin pipelines seemed to be the

only outlet for the Iraqi oil exports if the Security Council allows Iraq to sell some oil.

Iraq's other pipeline links to Saudi Arabia and Syria were destroyed by allied bombs in the Gulf war.

The Turkish official said the government was waiting for a U.N. decision before allowing the use of the pipelines. He added that the pipelines were technically ready to start functioning.

The Security Council reached an informal agreement Thursday to tightly monitor any Iraqi oil exports it permits, but the council recessed after closed consultations without deciding whether to allow the sales. No date was set for a new meeting.

Turkey shut down two Iraqi pipelines in accordance with the U.N. embargo against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait a year ago. It also ended trade with Iraq. As a result, Turkey suffered an economic loss estimated at \$7 billion.

The Istanbul daily Hurriyet reported Friday that Turkey was planning to organise a barter system with Iraq. In exchange for oil, Turkey would provide other goods.

A Turkish official said the two pipelines had an operational capacity of 1.5 million barrels of crude daily. He estimated that the pipelines would have to function about 250 days in order to carry the amount of crude Iraq wants to sell.

The parallel pipelines run from the Kirkuk fields to a terminal at Yumurtalik on the eastern corner of Turkey's Mediterranean coast.

After the war, President Turgut Ozal said he had personally intervened with the allies to spare the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline.

## U.N. says food on way to Sudanese refugees

NAIROBI (R) — The United Nations said Friday barges loaded with 300 tonnes of food were nearing a remote town in southern Sudan where about 100,000 Sudanese fled after attacks on their refugee camps in neighbouring Ethiopia.

A spokesman for the World Food Programme (WFP), the U.N.'s biggest food agency, said the boat convoy to the rebel-held town of Nasir in the southern Upper Nile state was the first river operation in the swamp region since 1987.

WFP spokesman Paul Mitchell told Reuters the barges, which are considered to offer the most economical way to bring emergency aid to the area, were due to arrive in Nasir Saturday.

At least 250,000 Sudanese are

estimated to have trekked back across the border from Ethiopia in recent months, usually arriving weary, sick and starving.

They had initially fled from civil war and persistent famine at home, but returned from their camps in western Ethiopia due to insecurity in the region following the collapse of the Addis Ababa government in May.

The deliveries were part of a relief deal negotiated last month by the United Nations, military authorities in Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to allow food to be delivered equally to government-held and rebel areas.

The SPLA has been fighting for eight years to end domination by the north and for a greater share of meagre national income.

"Some has been sold (privately) and the rest, which is full of dirt, has been sold to the government."

## Britain says nuclear exports to Iraq were not for military use

LONDON (R) — The government of Prime Minister John Major, facing political uproar over licences for nuclear exports to Iraq, said Saturday the chemicals involved were cleared by experts as having no military end use.

Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Lilley said items which appeared on a government list, authorising nuclear exports to Iraq until three days after its invasion of Kuwait last August, were allowed only after stringent checks.

The list, which appeared as part of evidence submitted by the Department of Trade and Industry to a parliamentary committee, investigating British exports to Iraq, included materials vital to any nuclear weapons programme.

Two grammes of uranium could not conceivably make a bomb but could save a child's life, Mr. Lilley told reporters.

"Permission would for instance have been given for the export of tiny quantities of radioactive chemicals for use, for example, in or as an integral part of medical equipment," Mr. Lilley said in a statement released by his department.

In some cases, Mr. Lilley said, licences were for temporary exports whereby substances were to be returned to Britain after use in Iraq.

It was not clear whether any of

the authorised exports actually reached Iraq.

Mr. Lilley's statement said licences were examined by his department, the Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Energy, depending on the nature of the case.

Permission would be granted to export chemicals only if departments were satisfied that "they were to be used for non-military purposes."

The list also covered the export of chemicals which could be used to make poison gas and material which could be used to make armour-piercing shells, scientists said.

"I was astounded at the list and what was on the list," said Kenneth Warren, the Conservative MP chairing the committee.

Opposition parties immediately sought to embarrass Mr. Major, whose government has been rocked by a scandal over the closure of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) after an alleged multi-billion-dollar fraud.

"The prime minister should now provide an immediate explanation of how highly dangerous materials, including plutonium, depleted uranium and other nuclear-sensitive materials, reached Iraq," said opposition Labour Party spokesman Gordon Brown.

## Minister says Iraqi farmers are withholding produce

BAGHDAD (R) — Trade Minister Mohammad Mehdi Saleh said Iraqi farmers were pushing up food prices by withholding grain from the government to sell privately.

Mr. Saleh, in an interview published in the army newspaper Al Qadissiya Saturday, said traders were also to blame for the high prices, which are forcing many families to spend almost all their income on food.

The government decreed in May that farmers must sell all their wheat, barley, maize and rice to government agencies for distribution to consumers through the ration system.

But Mr. Saleh said many farmers were not complying.

"After the harvest most farmers have kept their products and have taken what they need for one year, some for replanting and some for feeding their animals," he said.

"Some has been sold (privately) and the rest, which is full of dirt, has been sold to the government."

Grain is in short supply because of U.N. sanctions in force since last August.

The price of flour on the black market has been up to 100 times the price charged at government shops.

Iraq, which imported about 70 per cent of its food needs before the Gulf crisis, has asked the U.N. to allow it to sell oil to buy food and medicines.

A fact-finding team led by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan reported earlier this month that Iraq's cereal harvest was likely to be one third of last year's.

Mr. Saleh said the government was unable to dictate prices to the local market. "If we ask merchants to charge a lower price they will stop supplying such goods to the market and then the market will lose but the merchants will lose nothing."

He said that to overcome this problem government stores had started selling some food over and above the rations at lower prices than the merchants in the open market.

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## MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEF

### Bush ends freeze of Kuwaiti assets

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush signed executive orders releasing Kuwaiti assets that were blocked after Iraq's invasion nearly a year ago and continued sanctions against Baghdad, the White House announced. Mr. Bush said he extended the emergency order he issued against Iraq soon after its invasion of Kuwait last Aug. 2 "because the government of Iraq has continued its activities hostile to U.S. interests in the Middle East." The order keeps the trade ban in place and continues the freeze on Iraqi assets. In a separate directive, Mr. Bush said Iraq's ouster from Kuwait and the reinstatement of the Kuwaiti government had eliminated the need for continuing a freeze on billions of dollars of Kuwaiti assets in the United States. The assets had been frozen last Aug. 9 to prevent Iraq from gaining access to them. "Those orders were issued to protect the assets of the government of Kuwait which were subject to United States jurisdiction, and to prevent the transfer of benefits by United States persons to Iraq based upon its invasion of Kuwait," the directive said.

### 'Satanic Verses' to appear in Polish

WARSAW (R) — A Polish version of Salman Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses" will go on sale this year but the translator's name will be kept secret following attacks on Mr. Rushdie's Japanese and Italian translators, the publishers say. The official news agency PAP said on Saturday the edition to be brought out by publisher Phantom-Pres International this autumn was the last for which the novel's copyright holder had agreed to sell foreign language rights. Mr. Rushdie was forced into hiding in February 1989 after Iran's late spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini ordered his death for blasphemy against Islam. The Japanese translator of "The Satanic Verses" was stabbed to death earlier this month, just days after the Italian translator was stabbed and seriously injured at his Milan flat.

### Doctors fix hole in Ozal's eye

ISTANBUL (R) — Doctors found a hole in the retina of Turkish President Turgut Ozal's left eye and treated it with lasers, his doctor said Friday night. Mr. Ozal, who had gone to hospital for a routine checkup, is in good condition, doctor Cemiz Aslan said. He has left hospital and gone to an officers' club to rest, Turkish radio said. Mr. Ozal, who had eye surgery in the United States in 1988, cancelled a trip Saturday to southeastern Turkey, where he was to open a water tunnel from the Ataturk Dam.

### Egyptians complain of beatings in Kuwait

CAIRO (R) — Twenty-four Egyptians returning to Cairo from prisons in Kuwait said they had been beaten and many more Egyptians remained in detention there, the daily Al Gomhouria reported Saturday. Ayman Al Ashouli, 27, a driver from Alexandria, said a group of Egyptians working in Iraq had walked across the border into Kuwait under heavy allied bombardment during the Gulf war. In mid-March, Kuwaiti police threw them into prison and started beating them with sticks and iron rods. Another returnee, "Eid Hassan Mursi from the Nile Delta town of Mansoura, said many Egyptians were still in Kuwaiti custody, ill from privation and beatings. A foreign ministry spokesman said no precise figures were immediately available for how many Egyptians were now resident in Kuwait, or how many were still being held in Kuwaiti prisons. "In the confusion that followed the end of the war, we can understand that some Egyptians may have suffered by mistake," he told Reuters. "But there are many Egyptians now back in Kuwait taking up their responsibilities there."

### NASA: No global effect from Kuwaiti fires

MOUNTAIN VIEW, California (R) — Scientists at the U.S. space agency said Friday they do not expect any global atmospheric changes to result from the smoke pouring out of Kuwait's burning oil wells. Researchers at the Ames Research Centre, a division of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, said they flew in May and June through the smoke rising from oil wells to study the interaction of solar radiation with the smoke. The scientists said their data showed that climatic effects from the smoke will be limited to the Gulf region. Temperatures on the ground below the smoke had dropped about several degrees below normal, while temperatures inside the plume was much higher than normal. "No global effects are foreseen," NASA said in a prepared statement.

### Israel says no assurance to Syria

(Continued from page 1)

states and wanted "to start them now."

The premier placed special significance on talks with Jordan, Syria and the Palestinians, telling a Canadian delegation that "we must especially talk with Syria and Jordan and find a formula for coexistence with the Palestinians."

However, Mr. Shamir acknowledged that "there are still a lot of questions that need to be clarified" before peace talks could go ahead.

Mr. Shamir told the Canadian delegation that he welcomed Syria's willingness to negotiate with the Jewish state.

"There are still obstacles, but I hope that with good will and the will to achieve peace, we will be able to sit together around the negotiating table," he added.

### Israel: No talks on Lebanon with Syria

(Continued from page 1)

for the first time the president of Syria is ready to negotiate with Israel. I don't know what the reasons are for this and at that point it doesn't matter," he said.

Mr. Shamir added that no one could predict the outcome of the negotiations, noting he expected they would be fraught with complications.

Still, Mr. Shamir told the Canadians that Israel "must start negotiations, and we want to start them now."

"We are realists," Mr. Hawatmeh said. "The grand dream of destroying Israel and setting up a Palestinian state in its place stopped a long time ago. But realism is one thing and boasting the white flag is another."

Mr. Hawatmeh said that according to his information, Washington was re-legating Palestinians expected to take part in a peace conference to a small delegation that would not even be part of a joint team with Jordan.

If this were accepted, "it means that the PLO is forgotten and wiped out from the political map in the Middle East and the world as a whole."

### Gulf war relief starts debate on U.N. emergency response

(Continued from page 1)

GENEVA (R) — The Gulf crisis, which triggered a series of refugee crises, highlighted the need for swifter United Nations action in emergencies and prompted a big power call for a humanitarian overlord.

But the idea has met a mixed response from the international relief community.

While independent agencies say a U.N. supreme would cut through red tape to get food and medicines to refugees swiftly, U.N. agencies say such a role would slow down relief efforts. Third World nations fear infringements of their sovereignty.

When millions of Kurds and Shi'ite Muslims fled Iraq after the war, bureaucracy, poor coordination and inter-agency competition hampered the work of specialised U.N. bodies, independent relief organisations and donor nations say.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), whose work is vital in emergency relief, agreed.

"There is a crying need for someone placed above the various U.N. agencies and who can give them orders," says an official of the French organisation Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors

Without Borders).

But U.N. agencies in Geneva said a humanitarian overlord would only slow down relief efforts.

"What we need most and fastest in an emergency situation like this one is money," says a U.N. relief official. "Naming a humanitarian supremo would only add yet another layer to an already heavy bureaucracy."

This official and staff of NGOs say the U.N. system coped well with the first phase of the Gulf crisis, when hundreds of thousands of foreign workers fled Iraq and Kuwait after Iraq invaded the emirate last Aug. 2.

"That's because donor nations provided funds rapidly while Iraq's neighbours let their borders open and contributed their own scarce financial resources," the official said.

But in the Kurdish crisis, after

overlord's job already exists. UN-DRO was set up 20 years ago to coordinate aid during major disasters. But critics say it lacks authority.

The high commissioner for refugees, Sadako Ogata of Japan, has suggested setting up a pool of cash, supplies and personnel to enable the U.N. system to respond promptly to refugee crisis.

But U.N. sources say she, like the heads of other U.N. relief bodies, opposes the appointment of a humanitarian overlord — a job for which Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, one of her predecessors and the current humanitarian envoy to the Gulf, is often tipped.

"When we can mobilise financial resources fast, half the problem is already solved," says a UNHCR official.

The idea of a humanitarian overlord has received an equally cool response from Third World

nations. Heavyweights such as Brazil and Mexico see it as opening a door to Western interference in their internal affairs.

Privately they express fears that the allied military intervention in Iraqi Kurdistan, which gave way later to a U.N. presence, could be repeated.

"United Nations activities in the humanitarian field do not and should not constitute infringements of national sovereignty," Brazil's permanent U.N. representative, Ronaldo Sardenberg, said during a recent Geneva debate.

"Appointing a humanitarian supremo would be a job for which Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, one of her predecessors and the current humanitarian envoy to the Gulf, is often tipped.

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The idea of a humanitarian overlord has received an equally cool response from Third World

guide of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah (Party of God), which is engaged in guerrilla attacks on Israeli troops occupying the border strip in the south.

He also attacked President Hwai's government for agreeing to take part in the Middle East peace conference

## Royal Decree announces commission on Jerusalem members

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Royal Decree was issued Saturday announcing the names of the new members of Higher Commission on Jerusalem Affairs which was originally created in 1973.

Senate member Akram Zaiter retains the chairmanship and Fayed Jaber will remain the commission's secretary general.

According to Mr. Jaber, whenever a new cabinet is formed a Royal Decree is issued announcing the names of the commission members, some of whom should be ministers.

According to the Royal Decree, the commission members are: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Raef Nijem, Foreign Minister Abdullah Ensour, Minister of Information and Culture Khaled Karaki, Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Mohammad Mheilan, former Mayor of Jerusalem Rawhi Al Khatib, Vice-President at the University of Jordan Adnan Al Bakheit, Latin Bishop in Amman Salim Al Sayegh, and Salim Khalil who represents the Greek Orthodox community in the Kingdom.

## Ministry, local firm reach agreement

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation Saturday concluded a deal with a local construction firm to carry out the second phase of a project which entails the replacement of 11 kilometres of pipelines in the Jordan Valley region.

The pipeline, to carry irrigation water from the King Talal Dam to the Jordan Valley farmlands, will cost JD 2.8 million, according to a statement.

It said that the project, to be financed through a loan from the Arab Development Fund, will be complementary to the first phase which was executed between 1987 when seven kilometres of pipelines were laid.

According to a Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) official, the project was bound to save considerable amounts of water that used to be lost when old pipelines repeatedly burst, causing damage to agricultural units, with some flooded others not receiving water at all.

The statement said that the project would be completed in 18 months.

The contract was signed by JVA Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah and the local firms manager.

In another development, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Saturday announced that it had prepared technical designs and plans to set up Wadi Rajel Dam, 45 kilometres north of Al Azraq, to collect rain water for irrigation in the dry season.

The statement by Dr. Kamel Radadih, director of the Water Resources Department, said that when completed, the dam would have a storage capacity of 3.5 million cubic metres of water.

The dam will be set up in a semi-desert area where water could be used to supply livestock with drinking water and to plant animal feed, according to Dr. Radadih.

He said that the ministry had prepared plans to set up a number of desert dams and noted that tenders for these projects would be announced after the ministry has ensured financial funds were available for their implementation.

In his government policy statement to Parliament earlier this month, Prime Minister Taher Masri said that lack of water was a major problem that impedes the country's socio-economic development.

He promised a national water strategy for the coming two decades and said that plans and studies would be prepared to build dams along with other measures to make available sufficient water for irrigation purposes.



**ESBOUL RECEIVES IRAQI OFFICIAL** Interior Minister Jawdat Al Esboul (second right) Saturday received a message from his Iraqi counterpart. The message was delivered to him by Governor Jasssem Mohammad Al Rukabi (second left) of the Iraqi District of Al Anbar, who is currently visiting Jordan. Mr. Esboul said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the message dealt with ways of promoting the brotherly relations between Jordan and Iraq as well as facilitating the movement of citizens between the two countries. Mr. Esboul said he had sent a reply message to the Iraqi minister with Mr. Al Rukabi stressing Jordan's willingness to bolster ties with Iraq. The meeting was attended by Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior Salameh Hamad, Mafrag Governor Mahmoud Al Sari and border forces Commander Sharif Fawaz Zaben Abdallah. Mr. Al Rukabi also held Wednesday a meeting with Mr. Al Sari to coordinate procedures and efforts on the Jordanian-Iraqi border.

## Japanese goodwill ambassador shocked by children's plight in Iraq

By Nur Sati  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, Japan's goodwill ambassador for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), recently arrived in Amman after a five-day tour of Iraq.

Accompanying her were 13 journalists, television crew and photographers.

The purpose of her visit was to assess the situation, particularly of the children of Iraq, and to collect as much evidence as possible in terms of photographs and interviews with the Iraqis so that the Japanese people would get another perspective of the war.

"The Japanese people will be shocked. We have many television programmes (about the war) and news, such as CNN, but we never saw what the situation was really like," Ms. Kuroyanagi said.

Ms. Kuroyanagi, a popular television personality said that three different programmes would be aired. The number of viewers, she added "will be around 50 million."

Another way to inform people will be through printed material. Two widely circulated newspapers will see to that, she said.

One newspaper is read by 15 million people and another one has a circulation of eight million, according to Ms. Kuroyanagi. "Many Japanese people will know about the situation," she said.

According to the programmes are released, Ms. Kuroyanagi will begin a fund-raising campaign so that desperately needed milk, food and medi-

cine could be bought for the malnourished children. "This is my ninth mission of this sort and in the past we were able to raise around \$1 million, she said.

Ms. Kuroyanagi, since her appointment as a goodwill ambassador in 1984, has travelled to Tanzania, Niger, India, Mozambique, Vietnam, Cambodia, Angola and Bangladesh.

"We want to show the Japanese people the other side of the world, that peace is important," Ms. Kuroyanagi said, explaining the nature of the message she wants to relay through her programmes. "We (Japanese) understand what Iraq is going through because after World War II, Japan was in the same situation. I was a child, I remember so I understand how it feels. Children never complain."

Ms. Kuroyanagi recalled her visit to Tanzania where she was told by the village master that people usually complain before they pass away. But children never complain, he had said. They trust adults and die under the banana leaves.

"I did not understand it at the time. Now I do. We must work and relieve their (the Iraqi children's) suffering," she said.

The delegation met with the Iraqi prime minister, the foreign affairs minister, the labour minister and the undersecretary and were briefed on the students' potential in a bid to build integrated and balanced characters that could confront the needs of life ahead," the minister said.

Before the delegation headed for Iraq, during the stop-over in Amman, the group visited Al-Jizeh Community Development Centre and Tablieh camp for Palestinian Refugees south of Amman.

Ms. Kuroyanagi is also a well-known author of thirteen books on children. One of the books, "Toto-Chan, The Little Girl in the Window" sold more than seven million copies in Japan and has been translated into English. It became a best seller in the United States. The book has also been translated into 10 other languages, including Arabic.

## CSC issues job statistics

AMMAN (J.T.) — A report by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) about government departments and employees in 1990 revealed that 86,261 regular government jobs during that year were distributed among 43 departments.

The report noted that two thirds of these positions were concentrated in four areas: education, health, agriculture and the post office.

The report also noted that an additional 23,638 employees were working for the government on a seasonal basis in 1990.

Some departments were understaffed because employees were either seconded to other areas and countries or because some had received approval for long leaves of absence to continue

their studies, the report noted. It said that 68 per cent of the total number of government employees were males and that 0.3 per cent of the total number of workers held doctorate degrees.

The CSC report found that in 1990 its offices had received 47,555 applications for government jobs, of which 32 per cent were from men. Out of this number, 23 per cent were holders of university degrees, the report said.

Referring to the total number of people who were hired by the government, the CSC report said that only 2,346 of the applicants had received jobs, 69 per cent of whom were men. Of those who were appointed 51 per cent held university degrees.

Parliament member Mohammad Abu Alim, who attended the

## Orthodox Club, scouts to hold 4-day festival

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Orthodox Club in Amman and the Amman Orthodox Scouts are holding a four-day fair festival at the Orthodox Club in Abdoun from Aug. 1 to Aug. 4. Among

other things, the fair will include shops offering various presents, food and drinks, a puppet show, games for children and adults and a raffle for a Toyota car and other prizes.

Money collected for the raffle will be used by the organisations to help hospitals, centres for the handicapped and other humanitarian organisations. Part of the money will be donated to charities to help poor families.

In addition to the many games there will be performances by the Amman Orthodox Scouts troupe.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

**EXHIBITION:**  
Handcraft exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.

## Premier briefs Senate on efforts for peace conference

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament will meet Sunday in a special session to be briefed by Prime Minister Taher Masri on the latest developments regarding U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's peace initiative.

The House will have another session on Wednesday to discuss matters on the agenda, according to a statement by House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabyah.

Mr. Masri Saturday presented a full briefing to the Senate about the latest developments in the Arab and international arenas and on efforts to give momentum to a peace conference.

The Senate discussed all issues and ideas presented by the prime minister in light of Jordan's principles stand with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict and Jordan's role in helping to bring about a just peace and a solution to the Palestine problem. Discussion covered the impact of these developments on the national security and the domestic front and national unity as well as Jordan's policies to enhance the national and pan-Arab march.

Senate members were in agreement on continued coordination with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and other Arab parties, regardless of the international pressures and the constraints resulting from the Gulf crisis.

Senate members stressed the gravity of the situation at this stage and called for continued consultation between the government and Parliament.

Before the briefing, the Senate discussed a number of amendments to laws as referred to the House by the Lower House. The Senate rejected a temporary law on Royal Jordanian (RJ) as referred to by the Lower House by a majority of 24 votes.

The rejection was due to the

occurrence of the term "regular" coupled with the phrase "air transport operations."

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport Ali Suheinat said that such term does not prevent the national airline for carrying out its required duties and earn revenues.

The minister reminded the House that the RJ was to be transformed into a public shareholding company and that any investors would like to be assured of the privileges and rights given to the RJ before embarking on this enterprise.

The Senate decided to hold its next session on Tuesday in the presence of the Council of Ministers, to follow up discussions on laws and amendments.

## Workshop for principals opens

AMMAN (J.T.) — The German government is financing a 10-day seminar, by the Ministry of Education, for trainers of school principals to help implement resolutions passed by the national educational conference's resolutions.

A total of 100 principals of government schools, taking part in the seminar, will do theoretical and practical work pertaining to directing principals in their work. They will also watch documentaries of case studies and take part in workshops on communicating with teachers and principals.

The implementation of the 1987 national educational conference entails a complete revision and development of teaching methods, textbooks and any other aspects related to the educational process, especially the choice of appropriate and qualified school principals, Minister of Education Eid Dahiya said in an address at the opening session.

"The Ministry of Education wants the principals to move away from the traditional methods and direct their attention to the genuine educational roles," Dr. Dahiya said. "The role of a school principal is no longer restricted to keeping discipline and order in his school and monitoring the attendance of students, but rather to focusing on the students' potential in a bid to build integrated and balanced characters that could confront the needs of life ahead," the minister said.

The delegation met with the Iraqi prime minister, the foreign affairs minister, the labour minister and the undersecretary and were briefed on the students' potential in a bid to build integrated and balanced characters that could confront the needs of life ahead," the minister said.

Before the delegation headed for Iraq, during the stop-over in Amman, the group visited Al-Jizeh Community Development Centre and Tablieh camp for Palestinian Refugees south of Amman.

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## Government to help tomato growers

### Masri meets farmers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Taher Masri met at the Parliament with a delegation representing the farmers in the Mafrag and northern Badia regions and discussed with them matters related to farming projects in their regions.

Discussion at the meeting, which was also attended by a number of Cabinet ministers and Parliament members from the Mafrag region, involved the question of marketing tomatoes and their low price which causes heavy losses to farmers.

Parliament member Mohammad Abu Alim, who attended the

meeting, said that the government had instructed the tomato paste factory at Arida to purchase the tomato crop at 70 fils per kilogramme, 20 fils higher than the normal price, so that farmers can benefit from the sale.

Dr. Abu Alim told the Jordan Times that he appreciated the prime minister's gesture, which, he said, would be of benefit to the farmers and would encourage them to increase production.

The farmers used to sell their crop at a low price to a merchant who made profit by exporting the tomatoes, according to Dr. Abu Alim.

## Jordan to attend Cairo communication talks

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs is preparing an integrated plan to develop waqf land owned by the Ministry of Awqaf and used for charity that has been frozen for many years in cooperation with the private sector, according to an announcement by Minister of Awqaf Raef Nijem.

The ministry plans to lease units of this land to private sector developers for a period of 30 years at the end of which the lands and the buildings on them will be returned to the ministry.

..The tombs of Prophet Mohammad's companions in the Jordan Valley will receive appropriate attention by the Ministry of Awqaf and at least JD 500,000 will be spent on Obaida's tomb in the coming year," the minister said.

Due attention is being given to the companions' tombs, found in Jordan, in implementation of directives by His Majesty King

Hussein in 1984," said the minister.

Referring to the ministry's other plans and programmes, Mr. Nijem said that the ministry had embarked on measures to build an Islamic college to turn out mosque preachers and imams.

Work on the project will start in the coming year and the initial estimate of the project is put at JD 1.5 million, the minister pointed out.

He said that the Islamic Dawah Society of Libya had contributed \$400,000 to this project.

According to a Ministry of Planning official, the project aims at helping the government collect and analyse data about Jordanians returning from the Gulf crisis prior to working out short and long-term programmes to deal with the expatriates' needs and problems.

Earlier this month the government announced its decision to begin spending from a JD 120 million supplementary emergency budget for 1991, approved by Parliament last December, mainly to help absorb returnees from Kuwait and Gulf states.

Minister of Finance Basel Jarash said that he had issued instructions to the concerned authorities to begin spending the allocated sums for expatriate projects.

The government said that tens of thousands of expatriates have been forced to return from Kuwait. It added that it would carry out programmes like infrastructure projects to boost health facilities, improve water and power supplies, transport services and boost schools' capacity in order to absorb the expatriates.

Upon presenting his government's statement to Parliament earlier this month, Prime Minister Taher Masri said that absorbing the returning expatriates would be one of the government's main concerns.

Minister of Planning Ziyad Fariz and UNDP Resident Representative in Jordan Ali Atiqah signed the documents for the project at the Ministry of Planning.

Ministry to develop waqf land

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Arabs Faculty. The exhibition, which will last until July 31, displays handicrafts, traditional heritage items, books, children's toys and clothes and traditional dishes.

## Jordan Times

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## Is it too much?

**THERE IS** an emergency out there among the thousands of Jordanians who have returned from Kuwait. Granted, a few of the returnees are very well off, but the vast majority of them are penniless and their living conditions are steadily deteriorating.

Scenes resembling family picnics turn out to be expatriate families who have set up homes in isolated spots because they could not afford the rent on an apartment. Their only worldly possession is perhaps the vehicle they brought in from Kuwait. Many live in their vehicles and having to pay the fees for what is literally their "mobile home" is another burden on them.

Real-life stories are plenty: An 11-member family feeding itself with less than 40 dinars a month; someone who went to hospital but had to give up urgently needed treatment for lack of money; parents being asked by their children why they are not being sent to school even when it only costs less than five dinars a month.

Relief workers estimate that about 35 per cent of all returnees carried home nothing more than the clothes they wore. Most of them had no savings since their monthly earnings went to supporting families in Jordan and in the occupied territories.

True, they had a comfortable life in Kuwait but the memory of that life is about all they have brought home.

The conditions facing the hundreds of thousands of our brethren could perhaps not be seen detached from the overall situation in the country, given the fact that surveys have found that over one million Jordanians live under the poverty line. The government is doing what it can, perhaps not where it is highly visible. For instance, funds have been channelled to the education and health services systems to cope with mounting demand and easy-term loans are being granted for enterprise self-employment projects. Of course, one expects the government to do much more but then one also has to remember the limited resources Jordan has at its disposal.

What appears to be overlooked in the bargain is the fact that the upper class of the society also have a responsibility to shoulder some of the burden caused by their less-fortunate kinsmen.

It may not be any different from a typical Third World country, but the overall situation in the country warrants a very close look by the society at large with a view to determining what those affluent Jordanians can do to help alleviate the suffering of the thousands of expatriates.

Is it too much to remind a businessman who spends 100 dinars on a lunch for four that five per cent of that sum could feed an entire family of eight for a day?

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i Saturday focused attention on the on-going efforts to find a solution to the Middle East conflict in the light of the coming visit to the region by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker later in the coming week. It seems that the Americans and the Israelis are in full agreement on the steps to be taken and so they have coordinated their stands. Against all this, one cannot see any concerted action on the part of the Arab parties to the conflict despite the fast moving developments and the fact that the Israelis and the Americans are in concert about their stand, noted the paper. It should be emphasised that Israel has interest in dealing with each Arab party on its own and not facing the Arabs altogether, and for this reason Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir stated Friday that he was keen on starting the negotiations with the Arabs as soon as possible, the paper said. Jordan, for its part, has made it clear that it would not represent the Palestinians but that its position should not prevent the Kingdom from coordinating its stands with the other parties, the paper said. As Jordan reiterates its clear position and stresses that the Kingdom will never go it alone, said the paper, there must be a quick move on the part of all the Arab parties to coordinate their stand and embark on the negotiations in a manner that would safeguard all Arab interests.

President George Bush's written pledge to Syrian President Hafez Assad that Israel would withdraw its forces from all the occupied Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian lands reminds the Arabs of a similar written pledge given to King Hussein by former President Lyndon Johnson that Israel would pull out from Arab lands and implement U.N. Security Council resolution 242 in a matter of six months, said a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Saturday. We know for sure that the Americans are lying to us and that their guarantees lead nowhere and we know that former President Gerald Ford had given Israel the green light to annex the Golan Heights as was evident in Mr. Ford's letter to the Israeli government revealed in the Israeli press some days ago, columnist Tareq Maswaneh noted. He said that the Arabs also realise that these American presidents who appear to be more and more inclined to achieve peace, are in secret pumping more and more arms and cash into the Jewish state, the writer continued. All American pledges are false promises to the Arabs and are only a cover for the U.S. administration to offer more aid to the Jewish state, the writer said. These empty promises, he said, are also a sort of cover for the Americans to launch another aggression on the Iraqi people and deal at will with the Arab oil wealth, the writer added. Only those fools among the Arabs whose hands are stained with the blood of their countrymen and those who sold out their nation a long time ago, would like to believe the U.S. promises, the writer concluded.

## Sunday's Economic Pulse

# Israeli settlements for Arab boycott?

By Dr. Fahd Al Fanek

INSPIRED by the United States, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has proposed that the Arabs and Israel should make concessions in order to build good-will and enhance the chances of success for the forthcoming peace conference. The transaction aired by Mr. Mubarak is that Israel should suspend settlement in the occupied Arab territories, while the Arabs lift economic boycott against Israel.

It is obvious why Israel is not interested in any form of peace conference, much less its success. On the other hand, the Arabs were calling for an international conference for the last 18 years, since the Geneva conference convened for only one session and disbursed without any results.

During those 18 years Israel conveniently exploited Arab objections and reservations to prevent a conference that would have led to an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Clearly, Israel is not willing to return the occupied Arab land in exchange of any Arab concessions.

Israel, or at least the Likud government of Yitzhak Shamir, does not want peace because war is its only way for further expansion, and because its own peace is guaranteed by America, its strategically, through unlimited financial, military and political support. The status quo is thus quite desirable for Israel, at least in the short run and as long as the Arabs have no military option

and after the Arabs lost most of the cards which could be used against Israel, especially after the destruction of Iraq's power and the liquidation of the military presence of the PLO in Lebanon and elsewhere.

Obviously the present state of affairs is not favourable for negotiations from an Arab point of view. In the absence of Iraq and the PLO, the Arabs have very little, if any, bargaining power. The real parties in the coming peace conference will, therefore, be Israel and the United States. The outcome of the conference would in effect be what concessions the United States is willing to extract from Israel in favour of the Arabs against any price that Israel may charge.

The exchange of Arab boycott for Israeli settlement, despite its American-Egyptian origin, should not be rejected out of hand and without real calculation of the costs and benefits. Israel has already rejected the formula because it grew accustomed to free concessions from the Arab side. Israel would, of course, like Arabs to reject the offer because that would facilitate its position. It prefers to use the same American approach during the Gulf crisis, when it forced Iraq to make the very decisions that America wanted.

The Jordanian press voiced some objections to the exchange of concessions. Writers argued that it is not fair nor just to give up

the boycott, a legitimate act of Arab states sovereignty, for the halt of settlement in the occupied territories which is illegal in the eyes of international law. But this argument brings us back to square one. We have spent time and effort to prove the Arabs right and the Israelis wrong. But we are not in a court of justice which may uphold right because it is right and put down wrong because it is wrong, irrespective of the balance of power.

Prevailing between the two parties, it is true that the Arab boycott is right; but so are the withdrawal from the occupied territories, the independent Palestinian state and last but not least the principle of self-determination. These rights are empty as long as Arabs are unable to enforce them because of American policy in the Middle East.

Suspending settlement building has a vital political value. It means that the West Bank will not be Judaised and will eventually be recovered, while boycott is an ineffective economic process as long as the Israeli economy and treasury are heavily subsidised by American taxpayers.

Suspension of settlement building in the West Bank has more value to the Arabs than boycott. The evidence is that Israel will reject the formula based on calculation, and, I am afraid, the Arabs may also reject it, but out of ignorance and lack of calculation.

## Banker of choice to the CIA

By Larry Collins

**SAINT-TROPEZ**, France — Bankers are like doctors. They love to gossip among themselves about a colleague's shortcomings, but let an outsider try to listen to their conversation and they freeze.

"You see money flowing through those accounts from the CIA to Noriega to the contras," he says. "You also see drug money flowing through those same accounts." Many of those records were so embarrassing, according to Mr. Blandón, that the CIA seized them to prevent them from surfacing in a Miami courtroom during the general's trial.

John Blum, legal counsel to Massachusetts Senator John Kerry when the senator was investigating the BCCI's activities for the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations, maintains that the Bush administration has resisted a full investigation of the bank's laundering of drug money in order to prevent the disclosure of the CIA's relationship with the bank.

That accusation stems from the 1989 arrest of a group of BCCI officers for money laundering in Tampa, Florida. Instead of going after the bank itself, the Department of Justice allowed BCCI to enter a plea of nolo contendere in the case. In return, the U.S. Attorney's office agreed to drop all charges against the bank in connection with any wrongdoing by BCCI known to the U.S. government.

The CIA-BCCI ties seem to fit a pattern of agency activities during the tenure of William Casey.

I have in my possession dozens of BCCI documents dealing with then General Noriega's accounts at the bank's Edgewater and Cromwell Road branches in London. They reveal that from 1986 to 1988 money poured through those branches enroute from Panama to Luxembourg and then God knows where.

It is Mr. Blum's conviction that the CIA funded via BCCI a whole range of off-the-book covert operations set in motion all over the world to destabilise the Soviet Union — activities such as funding Solidarity and Afghan guerrillas. He believes those activities also included heretofore secret arms purchases for dissident Soviet ethnic groups ranging from Armenians to Azerbaijanis and Turcomans — in short, any ethnic group with a grievance and a readiness to act on it. It constituted, he is convinced, a flat-out Casey-driven effort to dismember the U.S.S.R.

For the CIA, a large Third World banking institution, staffed at the top by reliable friends, able to deliver money anywhere in the world without leaving any trace as to where it came from or how it got there, was a vital adjunct to covert operations.

The CIA's initial employment of the bank was not illegal or even, in the circumstances perhaps, unwise. Where the agency's wisdom can be questioned is in its continuing use of a bank that U.S. law enforcement knew was up to its neck in money laundering.

In its defence, agency officials will murmur that "in this business you don't deal with atlas boys," and point out that that BCCI laundered drug money helped cover the agency's activities with it.

That may be so. Nonetheless, the CIA-BCCI ties seem to fit a pattern of agency activities during the tenure of William Casey. Iran-contra is only the best known example — the wisdom and legality of which were dubious at best. — The International Herald Tribune.

## Iraq 'faces widespread starvation'

Sanctions against Iraq must be eased if the country is to obtain the oil revenue needed to repair its shattered social and economic life, says a UN fact-finding team. The following excerpts are taken from the report to the UN Secretary-General on "humanitarian needs in Iraq," drawn up by a UN mission led by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan. The authors who recently returned from Iraq, stress that their findings are based "on observations and conclusions drawn from on-the-spot evaluation."

THE mission members concluded that the scale of damage and decline in Iraq in the past year had been dramatic. The impact of sanctions had been, and remains, very substantial on the economy and living conditions of its civilian population. The mission was informed that the last reserves of food commodities that are included in the ration basket are in the process of being exhausted.

During the past several months, major efforts have been made by the government of Iraq to restore the country to some semblance of its pre-war situation. These have only been partially successful.

Damage to water treatment plants, and the inability to obtain needed spare parts, have cut off an estimated 2½ million Iraqis from the government system they relied upon before the war. The 14.5 million Iraqis who continue to receive their water through this system are now provided with a quarter of the pre-war amount of last year.

Current retail prices for wheat and rice — the two normal staple food items — remain 45 and 22 times their pre-war levels of last year, while incomes have shown only moderate gains. The government rationing system can only provide about one-third of the typical family's food needs.

Several independent studies, and direct observation by the mission, confirmed the high prevalence of malnutrition among children.

This clearly demonstrates a widespread and acute food supply crisis which, if not averted through timely intervention, will inexorably cause massive starva-

tion throughout the country. Electricity production is about 40 per cent of the 1990 level; as for telecommunications, at least 400,000 of the original 900,000 telephones lines were damaged beyond repair. All international telecommunications were put out of service.

The primary action that is needed to address these needs is the import of material goods.

This includes drugs, vaccines, medical equipment, ambulances, spare parts and replacements for power and sewage equipment, food and agricultural inputs, equipment and parts for power plants and the oil sector, as well as for the telecommunications network.

The following amounts of money will be needed to restore services: \$12 billion for the power generating capacity, \$6 billion for the oil sector, \$450 million for the water and sanitation systems, \$2.64 billion for food imports and \$500 million for agricultural imports.

While these calculations were not possible for health, an indicative figure would be the typical level of international imports for the health sector for one year, which has been approximately \$500 million.

It certainly appeared that the Iraqi government has the potential itself to generate the funds required to cover the needs identified by the team. This could be done either by unfreezing substantial amounts of Iraqi assets held abroad, or through the sale of oil.

According to the government, the current oil production capacity of the country is 1.455 million barrels per day. Taking into account internal consumption, the production available for export could be about one million barrels per day. This would mean a net revenue of \$5.5 billion over one year.

The mission therefore recommends:

• That Iraq be allowed to import over a four-month period \$1 billion of equipment, spare parts and materials to start restoration of the oil sector.

• That immediate steps be taken to alleviate the priority needs identified by the mission in the areas of food supply, health services, water and sanitation, power generation, the oil sector and telecommunication.

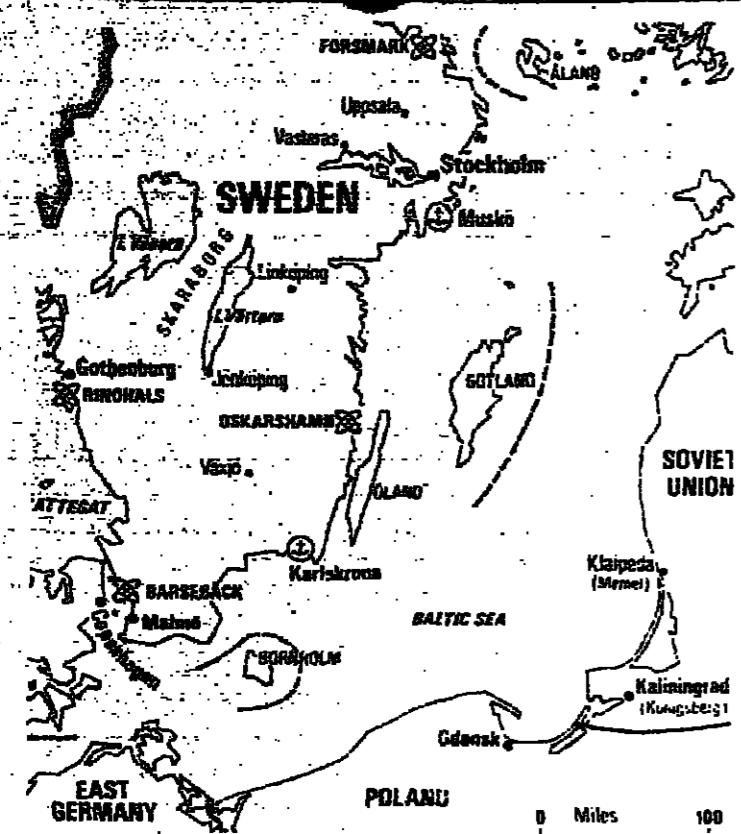
• Food imports should be allowed to meet the minimum consumption requirement.

• Imports of fertilisers, pesticides, animal feed and drugs, machinery and spare parts needed to repair the damaged irrigation and drainage system should also be allowed.

• Other imports should also be permitted, including drugs, vaccines, and surgical, dental and diagnostic equipment; vehicles and spare parts needed by the health system, including ambulances; spare parts and equipment needed by water treatment and pumping facilities and by the sewage system; and equipment, materials and spare parts for the electric power system, the oil sector and the telecommunications sector.

Finding the bank's services much to his liking, he made BCCI his prime personal bank, using it to pay for hotels, limousines and aircraft rentals on his trips abroad. He mixed into the same accounts in which he deposited CIA money sums that the Department of Justice now alleges came from narcotics traffic.

José Blandón, a former Noriega associate and a key wit-



## New 'fun' party rocks Swedish political life

By Lars Foyen  
Reuter

**STOCKHOLM** — An eccentric aristocrat and a pop music publisher have shaken Sweden's staid political establishment with a populist movement that aims to make life "simpler, cheaper and more fun."

Founded only six months ago, the New Democracy Party is already polling about 10 per cent in opinion surveys as Sweden heads for general elections on Sept. 15.

"We are witnessing a typical Swedish revolution. It is a polite process, but the message is clear: the people want a new system," party leader and businessman Count Ian Wachtmeister said in an interview.

New Democracy wants to make life simpler by, for instance, abolishing traffic wardens and more fun by easing the tough alcohol laws and cheaper by lowering taxes and privatising much of the social welfare system, one of the most extensive in the world.

It also wants Sweden to establish military ties with the West instead of being neutral, and to tighten up immigration policies.

Swedish politicians have reacted with horror at Count Wachtmeister and his party's co-founder Bert Karlsson.

Name-calling is rife. The media have dubbed the pair "the mad count and the butler."

Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson, a Social Democrat, has described them as "rightist loonies".

Foreign Minister Sten Andersson recently called them "Frankenstein's monster", to which Count Wachtmeister responded: "Andersson must have seen bert early one morning."

Count Wachtmeister, 58, is a practical joker. He once dressed as an air hostess to serve drinks at a birthday party aboard an airliner.

Karlsson, 46, founded his own record company and epitomises the self-made millionaire. For years he has stirred controversy with his provocative views aired on television chat shows.

Sweden's hidebound political scene has had no place for populists until now.

The Social Democrats have been in power for more than half a century, usually with the support of the small Communist Party. The Conservative Moderate Party, the Liberal Party and the Agrarian Party have provided the opposition.

But a dramatic drop in opinion poll support for the Social Democrats — down to about 30 per cent from 43 per cent at the 1988 elections — and a surge to some 10 per cent for the Christian Democrats are seen as signs that voters are tired of the old order.

Count Wachtmeister sees his early success partly as a protest against a dull and out-of-touch political establishment which "debates marginal policy differences in a language nobody understands."

Political scientists also cite disenchantment with Sweden's cradle-to-grave welfare state and some of the highest taxation levels in the world.

"It's a vote against bureaucracy and for individual freedom," said Count Wachtmeister, who thinks the popular uprising against Communism in Eastern Europe inspired Swedes to support his low-key revolt.

The central Stockholm office which doubles as headquarters for the New Democracy Party and Count Wachtmeister's company group, the empire AB, reflects the eccentric style of the count — a tall, slim, balding man who likes very loud ties.

Count Wachtmeister, a former director in the blue-chip Electrolux household appliance group and author of two critical books on Swedish politics, talks plainly on complex issues:

"It wouldn't be a massacre of the people's welfare, only of the bureaucrats," he said of the party's proposal to cut taxes to 46 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) from the current 56 per cent over a six-year period.

"Traffic wardens do nothing but harass people. Let's bring back the old-fashioned neighbourhood cop and let him enforce parking laws when absolutely necessary. As a bonus ordinary people could walk the streets safely again," Count Wachtmeister said.

Karlsson, 46, founded his own record company and epitomises the self-made millionaire. For years he has stirred controversy with his provocative views aired on television chat shows.

Sweden's hidebound political scene has had no place for populists until now.

## A tide of change on the Nile?

*On the eve of his visit to London, July 23 Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak talked to Godfrey Hodgson from the Independent.*

Only three of the 33 stations on Cairo's new Metro are named after modern Egyptians. There is Nasser station, called after Gamal Abdul Nasser, who carried out the revolution that brought Egypt to independence and tried to put his country at the head of Arab nationalism. There is Sadat station, commemorating Anwar Sadat, the son of peasants who made peace with Israel and rebuilt Egypt's links with the West, and who was assassinated by Islamic extremists. And there is Mubarak, honouring Hosni Mubarak, former member of Nasser's Free Officers Movement, who today comes to London as the Queen's guest and John Major's visitor.

Yet after 10 years of his presidency, Mr. Mubarak's face is not as ubiquitous as those of his predecessors, whose features, vastly magnified, stared from every public building and street corner. Like François Mitterrand Mr. Mubarak is carrying out a massive public works programme. But it does not celebrate a cult of personality, like Saddam Hussein's megalomaniac monuments in Baghdad. It marks the revival of confidence in a country which, in spite of severe economic difficulties and long experience of a corrupt and incompetent bureaucracy, is beginning to believe that the future for ordinary Egyptians will be more tolerable than the past.

President Mubarak's boldest decision so far was to cast Egypt's weight without equivocation on the side of George Bush's grand coalition against Iraq. The cost was not negligible. Egypt sent 38,000 servicemen to the Gulf and Egyptian officials calculate that the total financial cost of the war, including lost exports and lost remittances from Egyptians who fled from Iraq and Kuwait, is about \$20bn (£12m). Asked to draw up a balance sheet of the war, President Mubarak almost shrugged off the financial cost. "We are very good friends of the Saudis and the Kuwaitis," he said. "During the war, we didn't ask them for financial help, but — frankly speaking — they helped us, and whenever we need more we will ask them."

I pressed him about the present situation. After all, I said, almost a year has gone by since the invasion of Kuwait and Saddam is still in power. How does President Mubarak now reflect on the whole episode? Had it been wholly a disaster?

No, he replied. "It has been a very good lesson, and a hard and tough lesson, to those who break the rule of law and order, to those who come to a point of overconfidence so that they occupy the land of their neighbours."

"I am sorry for all the events of the aggression, but it didn't come to my mind at any time, even for a fraction of a second, that Saddam would occupy Kuwait!" This personal betrayal is still deeply resented. The main issue when he met President Saddam in May 1990, President Mubarak said scornfully, was the security of the Arab World "and in two months time he was taking over Kuwait!"

He did not elaborate, but when he spoke of his strong feelings against taking over your neighbour's land, he may not have been thinking only of Iraq. He feels strongly that Israel, too, must understand that the Palestinians "will never give up their land." The Israeli, on the other hand, is quite clear, ought to give up theirs, or rather the land on which they have built settlements in the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan heights. He is convinced that it would be in their interest in the long run.

"The Israeli people in an atmosphere of peace," he said earnestly, "will be in a far better condition in relation to the Arabs that in the present position of violence and the threat of war."

He was disappointed, needless to say, by the first Israeli response to the Egyptian and Saudi proposal that the settlements should be traded off against the Arab boycott. "Saying no gave me a very bad impression," he said. "Continuing building settlements will never lead to peace."

"Look," he countered, when I reminded him of the suspicions that the Israelis harbour of Arab

duplicity and traps, "whenever the peace process starts, any suspicions will be on the table. Nobody will hide anything, and if they did it would be uncovered immediately. So let us go through the negotiations. This is the best guarantee for the security of the region."

Whatever the financial cost, the political balance sheet of the Gulf crisis for Egypt has turned out — as President Mubarak himself put it — very much on the credit side.

The position of Egypt has been strengthened internationally. In fact, though Mr. Mubarak did not use that phrase, Egypt is now in the process of recovering some of the status as a regional superpower that it lost as a result of Anwar Sadat's decision to break ranks with the rest of the Arab World and seek peace between Egypt and Israel at Camp David.

Egypt, one of President Mubarak's advisers put it to me, has reinforced its Arab role by restoring its position as a key country in the Middle East and in helping to solve the regional crisis.

There have been ancillary advantages. The Egyptian military, roughly handled by Israel in 1967 and 1973, have regained confidence and prestige. Egypt's support of the UN during the crisis, Egyptian officials point out, will make it easier to use international force to deal with aggression, rather than leaving the weaker states in the region to fend for themselves.

That is all somewhat beside the main point however. The rub of the matter is that Mr. Mubarak, like Mr. Sadat but unlike Mr. Nasser, has decided to throw in his lot not with the radical Arab nations, or with the angry young men in the Arab street, but with the West. He is now a fierce opponent both of Islamic fundamentalism and of the shrill, anti-Western Arab nationalism of the Nasser era.

He is determined not to allow militant fundamentalism, of the kind that is on the march in the Sudan and in the Maghreb, to invade Egypt, though he points out wryly that the Middle East is not the only area of the world to be afflicted by fundamentalism of

one kind or another.

Most important of all, he is convinced that Egypt's own social and economic problems can be cured only with the help and sympathy, not to mention the investment, the trade and the tourism, of the West. In the first place, that means the U.S. But an important part of the point of President Mubarak's visit to London is that he means to forge the temporary alliance against Saddam Hussein into a new, more trusting and more co-operative relationship with the other members of the coalition.

Perhaps the most surprising consequence of the Gulf crisis, for Egypt at least, is that such a strategy is now far more realistic than it seemed a year ago. When Mr. Sadat broke with the Arab World and recognised Israel, it was a quixotic and dangerous gesture. For Mr. Mubarak, the calculation of advantage is less agonising, the danger demonstrably less.

He pointed out that for Mr. Sadat as well as himself, peace between Egypt and Israel was always only the first phase of the process that would be needed to bring peace to the Middle East as a whole. He sees the Gulf war as his opportunity to pick up his predecessor's initiative and move forward.



Hosni Mubarak: Palestinians will never give up their land

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Applicants or their employers must contribute to the cost of the training. USAID training specialists will work with employers and participants to identify the most useful training opportunity within the United States for the individual and the business, and will make all arrangements.

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## Mansell takes pole in Germany

HOCKENHEIM, Germany (R) — Briton Nigel Mansell stayed on course for a Formula One hat-trick Saturday by taking pole position for Sunday's German Grand Prix.

Mansell, driving a Williams, clocked a best time of one minute and 37.087 seconds in a tense final qualifying session to claim the prime grid position for the 45-lap race on the dangerous high-speed Hockenheimring.

Mansell finished two-tenths of a second clear of Brazilian world champion Ayrton Senna who improved his time by a second from Friday's opening session in his McLaren.

Austrian Gerhard Berger was third-fastest in the second. McLaren and will share the second row of the grid for the race with Mansell's Williams team-mate Ricardo Patrese.

All four drivers from the two leading teams were separated by only four-tenths of a second.

The pole is the 19th of Mansell's career, but the 37-year-old Englishman was angry afterwards because on his second flying lap, when he thought he would improve his time even more, he was badly baulked by Frenchman Erik Comas at the third chicane. After confronting him in the Ligier Pits, Mansell said Comas,

who had been taken to hospital in Mannheim after crashing heavily during the morning free session, had held him up deliberately.

"It is a great shame. This is one circuit where you do not do that sort of thing," he said.

Mansell waved his fist at the young Frenchman as he passed him after the chicane and later said he would "have leapt out of the car and said 'hello'" if he could have done.

Mansell's average speed was 252.219 kph.

The incident involving Mansell and Comas continued to reverberate after the session as Comas claimed that Mansell had blocked him on a fast lap Friday.

Sarcastically, the Frenchman said: "I am sorry I was driving on the same track as Mr. Mansell. I was trying to qualify for the race and he was on pole position."

Mansell said Comas was on his slowing-down lap and had blistered tyres, but Comas said he was able to get more speed from his tyres on his second lap.

"I was concentrating on my lap. That is why I did not look in my mirrors. I saw the blue flags, but what could I do?"

Mansell said: "We are averaging 160 mph not out there and for anyone not to look in their mirrors on this circuit is very dangerous."

ous."

Remarkably, since he had spent several hours in the middle of the day in the Mannheim clinic, Comas managed to improve his opening qualifying time and squeeze into the race by taking the 26th and final place on the grid.

Ferrari teammates Alain Prost and Jean Alesi are side by side on the third row.

Prost said Friday he was prepared to quit the Ferrari Formula One racing team before the end of his contract.

The French driver, under increasing press criticism in Italy this year, was speaking to Italian reporters during practice at the German Grand Prix.

"If the press doesn't like it ... even if I have a contract for 1992, I can say today ... if someone on the team wants to hire another driver next year, Senna or someone else, I will vacate my place," he said.

"Without a doubt I will do my job this year, 100 per cent, to win this championship. It is still possible even if it is very hard."

Prost is fourth in the World Drivers' Championship standings with 21 points from eight races — a distant 30 behind the leader, Ayrton Senna of Brazil.

In a television interview Thurs-



Nigel Mansell

day, an embittered Prost was highly critical of the Italian sports press, using a crude four-letter word to describe its professional word to describe its professional

Italian sports reporters demanded an apology. Ferrari President Piero Fusaro said he had reprimanded Prost over his choice of words but said the driver had the full confidence of the Ferrari team.

"Prost is with us for 1991 and he will be with us for 1992," Fusaro said.

## Generous adds King George to derby triumphs

ASCOT, England (R) — Odd-on favourite Generous romped to a record seven lengths victory in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes Saturday.

The victory completed a marvellous treble for Generous, winner of the Irish Derby and the English Derby this season.

Outsider Hallsham made the early running but Generous, ridden by Alan Munro, was always in contention.

Lester Piggott, bidding for an eighth win in the race, took up the running on Saddlers' Hall entering the straight but Munro easily covered the move.

Munro asked Generous to step up the pace approaching the two furlong pole and the colt quickly put five lengths between himself and the chasing pack.

"I would love to have him back in training next year, but it is looking increasingly likely he'll be off to stud," Cole said.

With Cole not keen on Generous travelling to the U.S. for the Breeders' Cup, the Arc could be his last race.

"He'll be turned out to grass as evens favourite for his next race, the Prix De L'Arc De Triomphe at Longchamp in October."

Generous is now being quoted as evens favourite for his next race, the Prix De L'Arc De Triomphe at Longchamp in October.

"I would love to have him back in training next year, but it is looking increasingly likely he'll be off to stud," Cole said.

Today you find that whatever business allies you can contact will help you somewhat to make up your mind but the final decision is yours.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have much work to do and if you work alone steadily and keep your mind focused upon the jobs to be done you can get through the day without any mishap.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You now find that most everyone you see wants you to have a good time and so do you but keep your purse zipped or you greatly lessen your well-earned security.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Whatever you have to do is basic and that requires consider-

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY JULY 28, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation  
able careful effort on your part is very good for you now so keep plugging away.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) If you avoid making that sarcastic comment that comes so quickly to your lips now you win a battle and save some vital usual companion goodwill.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Make a point now to keep your attention riveted upon finances and possessions and you can save yourself a bad mis- take through thoughtlessness.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) There are some questionable activities you are being tempted to engage in but if you keep yourself above reproach you will make big headway.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 18) You have many behind the scenes and intimate things to do and these are your best outlets today and tonight so steer clear of the limelight.

PISCES: (February 19 to March 20) Your usual friends are very preoccupied with their own ambitions and are not apt to give you as much attention as you wish so accept it in an understanding manner.

Today's child: If your child was born today she or he is endowed with far more vitality than the average child and it will be necessary that from earliest possible days you see that this energy is channelled in constructive directions. Exercise, such as controlled sports may be a part of this programme.

"The stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you.

## SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

### Marseille buys two young players

MARSEILLE, France (R) — Argentine midfielder Leonardo Rodriguez and Yugoslav striker Alen Boksic have agreed to join French champions Marseille and will not play for them until next season, sources close to the club said Saturday. Rodriguez, from Argentine side San Lorenzo, will probably be lent to a French club this season while Boksic, who plays for Hajduk Split, will stay in Yugoslavia, the sources said. Rodriguez was the revelation of the Argentine team which won the South American Soccer Championship last weekend. Sources close to San Lorenzo said he had been transferred for around \$1.33 million. No figures were available for the Boksic move. "I'm trying to buy young players, who, in a few years, will cost four or five times more than what I got them for," said Marseille chief Bernard Tapie in an interview with local newspaper Le Provence. Tapie said he declined a Liverpool offer to sell England's striker John Barnes for 50 million francs (about \$8.6 million) because the player was too expensive.

### S. African enters volleyball federation

CAIRO (AP) — The African Volleyball Federation announced Saturday it has granted membership to a new South African group despite a boycott of the white-ruled state by the Organisation of African Unity. The move means that South African volleyball players or officials will participate at least as observers in next September's all-Africa games in Cairo and other Egyptian cities. Chairman Nasef Seim of the African Volleyball Federation, just returned from South Africa, said his organisation accepted the application of the South African Federation for Volleyball because "there is no apartheid in... volleyball in South Africa."

### U.S. Open prize money to total \$7.25 m

NEW YORK (R) — The total prize money for this year's U.S. Open Tennis Tournament will be \$7,250,000, a record for the event, organisers have said. The prize money, which again will be split equally between the men's and women's competitions, exceeds \$7 million for the first time. Last year's total was \$6,349,250, the organisers said. Singles winners in the tournament, which runs from Aug. 26 through Sept. 8, will earn \$400,000 each and winning doubles teams will split \$164,500.

### Peanuts



### Andy Capp



### Mutt'n'Jeff



## Indurain stresses supremacy in Tour de France time trial

MACON, France (R) — Miguel Indurain underlined his supremacy on the eve of his expected Tour de France victory with a pulsating stage win in the final time trial Saturday.

The Spaniard powered relentlessly along the 57-kilometre race against the clock from Lugny to Macon to beat closest rival Gianni Bugno by 27 seconds, stretching his overall lead over the Italian to three minutes 36 seconds before Sunday's final stage.

Outgoing champion Greg Lemond of the United States finished third in the 21st stage, 48 seconds behind Indurain.

Scores of Spanish supporters

gathered at the finish, waving banners and chanting "Indurain, Indurain" to encourage their hero.

But he needed little help by then, his perfect style propelling him to all the best intermediate times from the 36-kilometre point onwards.

It meant disappointment for Bugno who had been seeking a stage win. "I was hoping to gain some time on him but he was too good. There was nothing I could do," he said.

It was the 27-year-old Indurain's second stage win of the tour, both earned in individual time trials. He won the eighth stage over 73 kilometres in Alencon exactly two weeks earlier.

Conchita Martinez gave top seed Spain a 1-0 lead over Germany in the other semifinal by defeating Barbara Rittner 6-4, 6-1. Martinez won 10 of the last 11 games in the match.

**U.S. and Spain lead in Federation Cup semis**

NOTTINGHAM, England (AP) — Jennifer Capriati slammed passing shots down both lines to defeat Radka Zrubakova 6-3, 6-1 and give the United States a 1-0 lead over Czechoslovakia in their best-of-3 semifinal Saturday in the Federation Cup.

Mary Joe Fernandez was to face Czechoslovakia's Jana Novotna in the second singles match, with the doubles scheduled to follow.

Capriati needed just 48 minutes to defeat Zrubakova, who lost her serve twice in each set and was unable to break Capriati.

The Czechoslovak tried to take advantage of Capriati's lack of speed by repeatedly hitting drop shots. The strategy worked at first, but the American adjusted in the second set, anticipating the drop shots and returning them for winners.

Conchita Martinez gave top seed Spain a 1-0 lead over Germany in the other semifinal by defeating Barbara Rittner 6-4, 6-1. Martinez won 10 of the last 11 games in the match.

**Lewis targets long jump world record**

SESTRIERE, Italy (R) — Olympic champion Carl Lewis said he would try to break fellow American Bob Beamon's 22-year-old long jump world record next week. If he succeeds, it could be the American's swansong in the event. Lewis said in New York last weekend he would no longer compete in the long jump if he broke the record in the high-altitude Italian resort of Sestriere next Wednesday. Injury prevented Lewis, unbeaten in the event for 10 years, from trying in Sestriere last year to beat Beamon's record of 8.90 metres set at altitude in the 1968 Mexico City Olympics. A spokesman for the organisers said Friday Lewis's Santa Monica Club team mate Leroy Burrell aimed to improve on the 100 metres world record of 9.90 seconds he set last month. Both he and Lewis arrived in Sestriere Thursday.

**Novacek, Gustafsson advance**

HILVERSUM, Netherlands (AP) — Second-seeded Karel Novacek of Czechoslovakia beat Argentine Franco Davin 7-6 (7-3), 2-6, 6-2 Friday to advance to the semifinals of the \$250,000 Dutch Open. Fourth-seeded Magnus Gustafsson lost a first set tie-breaker, but rallied to beat Switzerland's Marc Rosset 6-7 (3-7), 6-2, 6-4. Novacek will play Gustafsson, whom he beat in the final of the German Open in Hamburg in May. Dutchman Mark Koevermans, who upset No. 1 seed Sergi Bruguera of Spain Wednesday, will face Spaniard Jordi Arrese in the other semifinal.

**THE BETTER HALF.** By Harris



Conchita Martinez gave top seed Spain a 1-0 lead over Germany in the other semifinal by defeating Barbara Rittner 6-4, 6-1. Martinez won 10 of the last 11 games in the match.

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♦ 5 4 3 ♠ 9 6 5 4 ♣ 9 6 5 ♦ 9 8 7

**SOUTH**

♦ A 10 9 2 ♠ A 10 9 10 ♣ A 9 8 7 ♦ A 9 8 7

**EAST**

♦ 8 7 6 ♠ 9 8 7 ♣ 9 8 7 ♦ 9 8 7

**THE BIDDING:** South West North East

1 NT Pass 3 NT Pass

**OPENING LEAD:** Three of ♦

Be wary of hands that look too easy to be true. Frequently that's what they are.

The auction was straightforward enough. South had a perfect one no trump opening bid and North was just a couple of points short of prob-ing for slam. Certainly, game on the combined holding didn't seem to be in any jeopardy.

West led a low spade, and declarer captured East's king with the ace. With hardly giving the

Financial Markets			Jordan Times					
In co-operation with Cairo American Bank								
<b>U.S. Dollar in International Markets</b>								
<b>Currency</b> <b>New York Close</b> <b>New York Close</b>								
Date: 25/7/1991			Date: 26/7/1991					
Sterling Pound	1.6535	1.6620						
Deutsche Mark	1.7555	1.7440						
Swiss Franc	1.5330	1.5227						
French Franc	5.9765	5.9343						
Japanese Yen	158.63	157.60						
European Currency Unit	1.1787 **	1.1775						
USD per LTC								
European Central Bank rate: 1.5000								
<b>Barrel/currency Interest Rates</b> Date: 26/7/1991								
<b>Currency</b> <b>1 MTHS</b> <b>3 MTHS</b> <b>6 MTHS</b> <b>12 MTHS</b>								
U.S. Dollar	5.67	6.00	6.15	6.50				
Sterling Pound	11.12	10.93	10.81	10.75				
Deutsche Mark	8.81	8.93	9.18	9.43				
Swiss Franc	7.65	7.81	7.81	7.65				
French Franc	9.50	9.50	9.56	9.56				
Japanese Yen	7.37	7.37	7.15	7.30				
European Currency Unit	9.87	10.03	10.12	10.05				
Interest bid rate for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1 million or equivalent.								
<b>Precious Metals</b> Date: 26/7/1991								
<b>Metal</b> <b>USD/Oz</b> <b>JD/Gm*</b>			<b>Metal</b> <b>USD/Oz</b> <b>JD/Gm</b>					
Gold	366.00	7.00	Silver	2.10	.595			
All Kinds								
<b>General Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin</b> Date: 27/7/1991								
<b>Currency</b> <b>Bid</b> <b>Offer</b>								
U.S. Dollar	.556	.663						
Sterling Pound	1.1530	1.1588						
Deutsche Mark	.5920	.5950						
Swiss Franc	.4500	.4523						
French Franc	.1155	.1161						
Japanese Yen	.4977	.5022						
Dutch Guilder	.3485	.3505						
Swedish Krona	.1085	.1093						
Italian Lira	.0528	.0531						
Belgian Franc	.01906	.01915						
Per 100								
<b>Other Currencies</b> Date: 27/7/1991								
<b>Currency</b> <b>Bid</b> <b>Offer</b>								
Bahrain Dinar	1.7620	1.7930						
Lebanese Lira	.0770	.0790						
Saudi Riyal	.1626	.1635						
Kuwait Dinar	-	-						
Qatari Riyal	.1655	.1664						
Egyptian Pound	.1900	.1925						
Ornasi Riyal	1.7450	1.7550						
QAE Dirham	.1655	.1664						
Greek Drachma	.3400	.3600						
Cypriot Pound	1.4200	1.4400						
Per 100								
<b>CAR Indices for Amman Financial Market</b>								
<b>Index</b> <b>17/7/1991 Close</b> <b>24/7/1991 Close</b>								
All-Share	110.34	111.02						
Banking Sector	105.30	106.09						
Insurance Sector	118.27	119.37						
Industry Sector	115.00	115.76						
Services Sector	126.53	127.70						
December 31, 1990 - 100								

## Japan lends Romania \$100m

BUCHAREST (R) — Japan is to grant Romania a \$100 million loan to help the country implement a market economy following the overthrow of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, Economy and Finance Minister Eugen Dijmarescu has said.

"Japan decided to grant Romania a \$100 million loan as a contribution to the financial package offered to this country by the G-24, to support our reforms," Mr. Dijmarescu told the state news agency Ropress.

The loan is part of a \$1 billion package pledged by the Group of 24 industrialised countries earlier this year.

The European Community, which belongs to the G-24, authorised a first payment this month to Romania of \$130 million.

Western financial assistance to Romania has lagged behind that given to some other ex-communist East European states.

## EC predicts higher unemployment

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — The European Community (EC) commission predicted in a report that unemployment in the 12-nation EC will climb through the end of 1992.

In its annual review of EC employment trends, the commission also said the EC faces a shortage of skilled labour and noted wide gaps persist between the EC's richest and poorest areas.

"We are getting into a period which is not as favourable as the last few years," EC Social Affairs Commissioner Vassos Papandreu said in introducing the report.

The report predicted unemployment would average 9.2 per cent next year, up from an expected 8.7 per cent average this year.

Unemployment has risen steadily since mid-1990 amid a broad economic downturn fuelled in part by the Gulf crisis. May's 8.7 per cent rate was the highest in two years.

Mrs. Papandreu said Britain would see a notably dramatic rise from 8.4 per cent unemployment in May to 10.8 per cent next year.

An economic upturn expected to take hold in the second half of 1991 should lead to lower jobless rates by 1993, the report noted.

Reviewing recent trends, Mrs. Papandreu told reporters the poorest EC nations — Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain — have made little progress in bringing their economies up to the standards of their richer neighbours.

Between 1985 and 1989, she said, the jobless rate rose by 0.5 per cent in the four countries while it fell by one per cent elsewhere in the EC.

Mrs. Papandreu added 1990 per capita income in the four

nations was less than 70 per cent of the average elsewhere — the same discrepancy as in 1970.

"The problem remains very serious," Mrs. Papandreu said.

EC officials worry that persistent gaps between richer and poorer states will foil plans to set up an economic and monetary union of the 12 nations in the mid-1990s.

The report warned that EC competitiveness is threatened by an endemic shortage of skilled workers and called for tougher education standards.

In the EC, Ireland had the

highest jobless rate (17.1 per cent), followed by Spain (15.5), Italy (9.8), France (9.4 per cent), Belgium (8.5), Britain (8.4), Denmark (8.4), Germany (4.6), Portugal (4.3) and Luxembourg (1.9). Figures were unavailable for Greece and the Netherlands.

According to another major report, the unemployment rate for the industrialised democracies will rise sharply this year, and economic prospects for eastern Europe are worse.

The Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in its annual report on global labour trends, said the average unemployment rate for its 24 members would rise from 6.2 to 7.1 per cent this year, boosting the number of unemployed to about 28 million.

The largest increases were forecast for Britain (5.9 to 9.6 per cent), Australia (6.9 to 9.9), Finland (3.4 to 5.9), Greece (7.7 to 9.0), Canada (8.1 to 10.1), New Zealand (7.8 to 9.3), Sweden (1.5 to 2.8) and the United States (5.5 to 6.7).

The higher jobless rates were forecast to last at least through 1992.

"The prospects for a recovery

appear favourable, but it is unlikely to be a strong one," the report said. "Unemployment has risen significantly in many countries and will probably continue to increase well into the beginning of the economic upturn."

Of the 28 million unemployed, 8.4 million would be in the United States, more than triple the next-highest figure of 2.7 million in Italy, the report said.

The report said the labour market in central and eastern Europe was under "great strain" as the former socialist countries abandoned policies which virtually guaranteed jobs to everyone in the work force.

In Poland, the number of registered unemployed jumped from 568,200 in June 1990 to 1,322,100 in March, the report said. Poland's jobless rate climbed from 3.1 to 7.1 per cent during that period, while Bulgaria's soared from 0.5 to 3.0, the OECD said.

"Over the longer term, the pressure of migration from central and eastern European countries in transition is likely to become stronger," the report said.

"There is no sign that the sharp declines in economic activity in these countries will come to an early end ... many firms are making heavy losses and major plant closures are to be expected."

The OECD countries would receive new flows of migrants from developing countries, as well as from eastern Europe, the report said.

To cope with unemployment, the OECD recommended programmes aimed at making all workers as competitive as possible, with counselling and training to maximise their readiness to work.

It said any job creation schemes "should be framed to avoid creating dead-end, low-productivity jobs or subsidising jobs that would have been created anyway."

GNP fell by 1.6 per cent in the October-December period and an even sharper 2.8 per cent in the January-March period, meeting the classic definition of a recession as at least two consecutive declines in GNP.

While the Bush administration believes that a return to growth is a valid signal that the recession is indeed over, private economists are warning of the possibility of a "double-dip" recession in which GNP grows for a quarter or two only to slip back into the negative range as the recovery falters and the recession returns with full force.

Even if that scenario does not develop, analysts believe that a variety of problems facing the United States, from strains on the banking system to an overload of consumer debt, will make this expansion the weakest in U.S. history.

Michael Evans, head of a Washington forecasting firm, said that he was looking for the GNP to climb at a modest annual rate of around two per cent in the second half of the year, similar to the lackluster growth in the period before President Saddam Hussein's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait toppled the country into a recession.

The economy was just inching along before the war and that is exactly what we have returned to," Mr. Evans said. "We have removed the problems associated with the war but nothing else has changed."

Mr. Evans, however, said he was not in the camp that was fearing that the second-quarter GNP increase would be followed by further declines.

"Despite today's weak GNP number, the recession is over," Mr. Evans said. "We will get better growth in the third quarter."

The administration, facing a presidential election next year, has kept up pressure on the Federal Reserve (Fed) to boost economic demand by lowering interest rates.

Several ministers will oversee the process for the moment but there will be one minister within 18 months, Mr. Sedki said.

Western economists in Cairo say personnel will be key to Egypt's reform programme. If those in charge are not committed to the reforms, or if no unified structure emerges, painful but necessary austerity measures may be diluted.

Mr. Sedki said state firms would eventually be able to hire and fire, choose their own suppliers and market their products like any private company.

State company managers might stay on after restructuring, provided they were competent, and state companies short of cash would be able to sell shares on the stock market, he added.

## Kuwait loads first crude oil tanker since invasion

since March and up to 16 fire-fighting teams will be in Kuwait by next month.

"We will celebrate the control of the whole Magwa and Al Ahmadi fields by next month," said Sheikh Raqqa, adding that he hoped Kuwait would be able to meet its own needs for refined products by September.

The emirate, whose oil exports

were its major foreign currency earner, is seeking billions of dollars in foreign borrowing to compensate for the lost oil income and to finance post-war reconstruction.

Kuwait's main deep water export terminal of Sea Island is still out of action because of war damage.

Mine clearing operations by Western navies in the Gulf have made navigation to Kuwait safer. Western navies operating more than 30 vessels clearing Iraqi mines in the Gulf said this month all shipping routes would be clear of mines by the end of July.

## U.S. reports weak 0.4 per cent GNP increase in second quarter

WASHINGTON (AP) — The

U.S. economy started growing again in the spring, the government reported Friday, but the barely perceptible 0.4 per cent annual increase raised new concerns over whether the recession is really over.

The Commerce Department said that the gross national product (GNP), the country's total production of goods and services, expanded in the April-June quarter following two consecutive quarterly declines.

## Some Slovenes nostalgic about Yugoslavia

LJUBLJANA, Yugoslavia (AP) — Most Slovenes now believe that the rest of Yugoslavia won't use force to keep them in the federation. With time and negotiation, an independent Slovenia could be a reality.

But as the prospect of real independence approaches, many Slovenes are thinking hard about what that independence could cost.

The federal government in Belgrade has given no guarantee that it will let the Alpine republic become an independent state, and complex economic disputes still have to be thrashed out.

Yet the federal government has offered to withdraw its troops from Slovenia by the end of October. On Friday it allowed Slovenia's airspace to reopen. With the decrease in tension, thoughts are turning rapidly to what independence might really be like — and some Slovenes are worried.

Slovenia has been part of Yugoslavia for 70 years. Slovenes stood tall within the federation, envied by those in other republics as Yugoslavia's most modern and prosperous citizens.

Now, they face life on their own in a tough world economy.

"I think that we should celebrate only when we are sure everything is OK," commented student Olga Vukovic. "And even then, it will feel strange not being part of Yugoslavia anymore."

"The Slovenian economy is not cheap enough or good enough to sell outside Yugoslavia," complained Tomaz Gjovc, a linguist.

To be sure, the rest of Yugoslavia would suffer heavily from Slovenia's secession. Slovenia accounts for nearly 30 per cent of Yugoslav exports. The republic's gross national product per capita of \$6,000 is double the federal average.

But economic dependence is a two-edged sword. Slovenia, which has Yugoslavia's most developed manufacturing sector, traded 32 per cent of its manufactured products last year to the fellow republics.

Slovenia is thus vulnerable to economic pressure as it tries to reach agreement with federal authorities on its share of Yugoslav debts and assets.

The federal government and the largest republic, Serbia, are unlikely to give formal blessing to Slovenia's departure without some kind of payment from the northern republic.

Although the Ljubljana government maintains it has paid more into the common Yugoslav pot than it owes, some see problems ahead if the republic refuses to buy its way out.

Former Vice Premier Jozef Mencinger, who resigned in May partly because he thought Slovenian independence was being pushed too quickly, warned of a possible federally ordered trade boycott.

"We will have no market in the East and we are not (yet) competitive in the West," Mr. Mencinger said in an interview. He added that a 30-per-cent wage cut would have to be ordered in such a case to make Slovene goods more competitive on Western markets.

Boycott or no, Slovenia is bound to lose some markets in Yugoslavia as part of the price of independence.

Among Slovene companies unlikely to survive are Adria Airways, which largely depended on carrying Yugoslav migrant workers to and from West Europe and the Kompas Travel Agency, which dealt mostly in package deals to other parts of Yugoslavia, Mr. Mencinger said.

Such developments are bound to hurt ongoing attempts to retool the economy along capitalist lines by stripping it of the last vestiges of Communist mismanagement.

Mr. Mencinger said he expected living standards to continue falling at least until mid-1992. Unemployment, at 5.7 per cent last year, will likely reach 8 per cent by next year, he added.

The 50-year-old economist also expressed some concern about money supply. Slovenia continues to use the Yugoslav dinar as currency, and dinar availability is tightening because of a decision by the Yugoslav Central Bank to freeze supply to the independence-minded republic.

Such economic problems have many Slovenes worried.

Mr. Gjovc said he and colleagues have been told to brace for a wage cut next month. Pest exterminator Matjaz Strelc, 30, said his company might also reduce salaries.

## 24 die in Yugoslav ethnic war

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (Agencies) — Slovenian police prepared Saturday to take control of the breakaway republic's international borders, while the federal presidency said troops would remain deployed in Croatia to curb ethnic violence there.

Yugoslavia News Agency, Tanczug, said Saturday that ethnic violence between Croatian security forces and armed ethnic Serbs who oppose Croatian independence left 24 dead Friday.

A statement released by Yugoslavia's eight-man presidency on Friday warned that the situation in Croatia "threatens to escalate into an all-out war." It said a truce is a "precondition for finding a political solution to the crisis."

In Slovenia, a ceasefire has held for more than three weeks. Federal authorities Friday permitted commercial flights over Slovenia for the first time in a month. Austria said it would make direct loans to Slovenian companies, the Austria Press Agency said.

Slovenia's police are to take full control of the republic's borders with Austria, Italy and Hungary beginning Saturday Slovenia's Interior Ministry announced.

Slovenia and Croatia declared independence on June 25, and dozens of combatants were killed in Slovenia when federal army troops waged sporadic battles for weeks with Slovene fighters.

The army has agreed to withdraw from Slovenia, federal generals decided Wednesday that Slovene recruits and officers could leave army ranks by Aug. 15.

But violence has escalated in Croatia, where more than 100 deaths have been reported since fighting erupted there.

In Slovenia, a ceasefire Friday included Egon Scotland, a photographer for the German-based *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* newspaper, whose car was attacked by ethnic Serb gunmen.

The eight-man collective federal presidency, which formally commands the federal army, said

it would order the army to return to the barracks in Croatia only after the demobilisation of all militia groups.

The presidency also said Croatia's security forces should not be sent to ethnic Serb areas.

That decision was opposed by Stipe Mesic, Croatia's member in the presidency and its current chairman, the statement said. The presidency's demand for a ceasefire was adopted unanimously.

Croatia accuses the Serb-led army of siding with ethnic Serbs, whose demands to secede from Croatia are opposed by Croatia's President Franjo Tudjman and other Croat leaders. The Serbian-inhabited area comprises about a fourth of the republic's territory.

Army officials say the troops are needed to stop a bloodbath between the two rival ethnic groups.

Radisa Gacic, the federal health and social welfare minister, released figures from the Red Cross saying more than 44,000 people have fled their homes in Croatia to escape the violence.

Croatian Radio reported heavy

fighting near Glina, 50 kilometres south of the republic's capital Zagreb, and said five Croatian policemen had been killed. It was not clear if they were included in Tanjug's death toll.

Croatian defence forces also fought a three-hour battle with the federal army on the May 25 Bridge between Croatia and the Republic of Serbia, but no deaths were reported. The army is trying to keep the peace in Croatian trouble-spots.

About 70 people have been killed in the last week. The new fighting erupted despite a call for a ceasefire by the collective state presidency on Friday, increasing fears that Yugoslavia's worst ethnic violence since World War II was beyond control.

Amid fears that violence could spill over the borders, Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Markovic met prime ministers and foreign ministers from Italy, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland in the Adriatic resort of Dubrovnik.

"I do think a compromise will be found," said Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis.

## Floods kill 16 in Manila, central Luzon

MANILA (AP) — Floods brought by monsoon rains have killed at least 16 people in Manila and in central Luzon and forced the evacuation of about 20,000 people, officials said Saturday.

Two people have been killed in President Corazon Aquino's hometown of Concepcion in Tarlac province since Monday, when monsoon rains unleashed tonnes of mud, volcanic ash and other debris from the slope of Mount Pinatubo, which has been erupting since June 9.

Maj. Nicolas Ababon, spokesman of the regional Disaster Coordinating Council, said more than 17,000 people from the region fled to shelters in Concepcion and the nearby town of Mexico.

The Philippine Red Cross said the latest figures brought to more than 300,000 the number of people in evacuation centre in the area since Mount Pinatubo began erupting on June 9.

The rains also flooded many areas of Manila, stranding people

during the evening rush hour and forcing at least 3,800 to flee their homes.

Lourdes Masing, spokeswoman of the Red Cross, said six people died of electrocution in separate incidents in Quezon City's Tatalon district.

A Yemeni student, identified as Abdul Rahman Omer, 23, died Friday when he was accidentally electrocuted while switching on the fuse box in his boarding house in Manila's Sampaloc district, police said.

Firefighters squirmed foam on the towering blazes that raged for nearly 12 hours after the crash at 1:03 a.m. (23:03 GMT) in the city of Oeibisfelde, on the former east-west German border.

The eastbound freight train drove through a stop signal at a switching yard before it collided with the westbound passenger train, according to police in Magdeburg and a spokesman with the Reichsbahn, the national train company.

It remained unclear whether the engineer of the freight train disregarded the signal or was waved through.

Police in eastern Germany's Saxony-Anhalt state said three were confirmed dead and 21 were injured.

The three confirmed dead were two engineers in the passenger train and the engineer in the freight train, police said. None of the passengers were killed, they said.

The Reichsbahn reported 35 injuries and said that three people, all engineers, were missing. Police appeared to have the more current information.

The passenger train booked full with 340 people travelling from the east German city of Dresden to the west German city of Cologne.

Colombo newspapers said additional troops had been sent to join the reinforcements. Military sources refused to comment.

The independent Island newspaper quoted army Commander Hamilton Wanasinghe as saying troops were building up their reserves for the "final push" to the Elephant Pass camp.

The reinforcements were slow to advance because of heavy rebel resistance and mined roads, he said.

More than 930 rebels and 125 soldiers have been killed since July 10 when Tigers attacked the strategic camp on a stretch of land linking rebel-held Jaffna peninsula with the rest of the island.

Seven soldiers clearing a road in eastern Batticaloa district, where Tamil Tigers are also fighting their separatist campaign, were killed by a landmine Saturday, military sources said.

Sri Lankan rebels continue attack on army camp

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil rebels pounded an army camp in Sri Lanka's north with mortar fire for a second night and held at bay a relief column battling to reach the besieged garrison, a military spokesman said Saturday.

"The camp was attacked again with mortars and small arms," the spokesman said.

"There were no casualties among the soldiers and the attack was repulsed," he said.

For the past few days the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels have focused their attacks on a relief column of 2,000 troops trying to reach the 800 men trapped at Elephant Pass.

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